

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 1 - 33 (canceled)

Claim 34 (currently amended): A method of deriving ES cells comprising:

_____ (i) isolating cells from an embryo or embryoid body;

_____ (ii) maintaining a culture of those isolated cells in the presence of:

_____ (a) LIF and

_____ (b) PD098059 ~~(a) a first compound that activates gp130 and (b) a second compound, which is different from the first compound and inhibits MEK;~~

_____ (iii) dissociating the cells obtained from (ii); and

_____ (iv) maintaining dissociated cells obtained from (iii) in culture in the presence of:

_____ (a) LIF and

_____ (b) PD098059 ~~(a) a third compound that activates gp130 and (b) a fourth compound, which is different from the third compound and inhibits MEK.~~

Claim 35 (canceled)

Claim 36 (previously presented): The method of Claim 34 comprising developing an embryo *in vivo*, harvesting the embryo prior to pro-amniotic cavity formation and isolating cells therefrom.

Claim 37 (currently amended): A method of deriving ES cells comprising:

_____ (i) developing an embryo *in vitro*;

_____ (ii) isolating cells from the inner cell mass of the embryo;

_____ (iii) maintaining those isolated cells in the presence of PD098059 ~~a compound that inhibits MEK;~~

_____ (iv) dissociating the cells obtained in (iii); and

_____ (v) maintaining dissociated cells from (iv) ~~(iii)~~ in culture in the presence of PD098059 ~~a compound that inhibits MEK.~~

Claims 38 - 50 (canceled)